



## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** August 10, 2009  
**TO:** Environmental Commission  
**FROM:** Jon Maginot, Management Intern  
**SUBJECT: DROUGHT RESISTANT LANDSCAPING EFFORTS**

---

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Accept this report as an information item.

### **BACKGROUND**

As part of its efforts to encourage water conservation, the City of Los Altos City Council and Environmental Commission has determined that drought resistant landscaping should be used as an educational tool for residents. The City currently has three locations with such landscaping and another location with efforts underway.

### **DISCUSSION**

The three locations with drought resistant landscaping open to the public are Oak Avenue Elementary School at 1501 Oak Avenue, Almond Elementary School at 550 Almond Avenue, and the California Water Service Company maintenance office along Miramonte. The City will also use drought resistance landscaping at the intersection of Springer and Berry.

#### **Almond Elementary**

Installed in April 2009, the garden at Almond Elementary is located just beyond the front offices of the school. There is a path which runs the length of the garden allowing visitors to walk through and see the various plants. There are plaques identifying the plants. Plants in the garden include:

#### **Shrubs**

Santa Cruz Island Buckwheat  
Toyon  
White Sage  
Pitcher Sage  
Cleveland Sage  
Sticky Monkeyflower  
California Fuschia  
Foothill Penstamon  
Dwarf Coyote Bush  
Coast Silk Tassel  
California Lilac  
Manzanita  
Creeping Strawberry  
Pink Flowering Currant

#### **Flowers**

San Miguel Island Buckwheat  
Blue Eyed Grass  
Checkerbloom  
Douglas Iris

#### **Trees**

California Buckeye

#### **Grasses**

California Fescue  
Blue Oak

### **Oak Avenue Elementary**

The most developed of the public drought resistant landscaping is found at Oak Avenue Elementary School. Installed in 2005, the garden is located behind the school next to the playground and baseball fields, the garden allows visitors to walk between the various plants and provides plaques with information about each plant. The garden also features a redwood amphitheatre that can sit an entire class. Among the plants found at Oak Elementary are:

#### **Trees**

California Bay Laurel  
Incense Cedar  
Holly-leaved Cherry  
Valley Oak  
Big Leaf Maple  
Coastal Redwood  
Douglas Fir

#### **Shrubs**

Narrow-leaved Milkweed  
Western Redbud  
Coffee Berry  
Cleveland Sage  
Manzanita  
Native Rose

#### **Grasses**

California Fescue  
Deergrass  
Buckwheat

#### **Flowers**

Wild Lilac  
Common Coyote Mint

### **CalWater Maintenance Office**

Located along the sidewalk outside the CalWater Maintenance Office on Miramonte at B Street, the garden provides visitors a clear view of plants and their identification plaques. Plants found here include:

#### **Shrubs**

Heavenly Bamboo  
Hop Bush  
Strawberry Bush  
Ericaceae  
Mexican Sage  
Oleander

#### **Flowers**

New Zealand Flax  
Lantana  
Agapanthus  
Carpet Rose

#### **Trees**

English Yew

### **Springer and Berry**

The City owns a strip of land along Springer Road at the intersection with Berry Avenue. The Maintenance Services Department has created designs to implement drought resistant landscaping on this land. The area is accessible by sidewalk which will allow visitors to view the landscaping safely. Plants planned for this area include:

#### **Trees**

Chinese Pistache

#### **Shrubs**

Vine Hill Manzanita  
California Lilac

#### **Grasses**

Mexican Feather Grass

#### **Flowers**

Euphorbia

### **Next Steps**

Staff and volunteers are working on providing information that can be placed on the Environmental Commission website. Information will include maps of existing landscaping, pictures of various plants, purposes of drought resistant landscaping, lists of drought resistant plants, tips for planting drought resistant landscaping, etc. Other education measures should be considered to inform residents of drought resistant landscaping methods and benefits.

Attachment: Drought Resistant Landscaping Map